

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application.

Listing of Claims:

1. (ORIGINAL) A nicotine delivery product comprising an intimate mixture of the reaction product of a nicotine/cation exchange resin complex forming reaction and an organic polyol.
2. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) A nicotine delivery product according to claim 1, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein the ratio of resin to polyol is from about 1:1 to about 10:1, preferably from 2:1 to 8:1 and most preferably about 2.4:1.
3. (ORIGINAL) A method of preparing a nicotine delivery product, said method comprising (a) mixing an aqueous suspension of a nicotine/cation exchange resin complex with an organic polyol or an aqueous solution thereof, and (b) removing water from the mixture to produce said nicotine delivery product.
4. (ORIGINAL) A method of preparing a nicotine delivery product, said method comprising (a) mixing an aqueous solution of nicotine with a cation exchange resin thereby forming a nicotine/cation exchange resin complex, (b) admixing with said complex of step (a) in aqueous suspension an organic polyol or an aqueous solution thereof to form an aqueous slurry of nicotine/cation exchange resin complex incorporating polyol, and (c) removing water from said slurry to produce said nicotine delivery product.

5. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) A method according to claim 3 or 4, wherein the cation exchange resin is selected from the group consisting of:

- (i) a methacrylic, weakly acidic type of resin containing carboxylic functional groups
- (ii) a polystyrene, strongly acidic type of resin containing sulfonic functional groups, and
- (iii) a polystyrene, intermediate acidic type of resin containing phosphonic functional groups.

6. (ORIGINAL) The method according to claim 5, wherein the cation exchange resin is a methacrylic, weakly acidic type of resin containing carboxylic functional groups.

7. (ORIGINAL) The method according to claim 6, wherein the cation exchange resin is polacrilex (Amberlite® IRP64).

8. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) A method according to ~~any one of claims 3-7~~ claim 3, wherein the organic polyol is a non-toxic C₂ to C₁₂ linear or branched hydrocarbon having at least 2 hydroxy groups.

9. (ORIGINAL) A method according to claim 8, wherein the organic polyol is selected from the group consisting of 1,2-propanediol, 1,3-propanediol, 1,6-hexanediol, glycerol and sorbitol.

10. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) A method according to ~~any one of claims 3-7~~ claim 3, wherein the organic polyol is a non-toxic C₅ to C₁₂ cyclic or heterocyclic hydrocarbon having at least 2 hydroxy groups.

11. (ORIGINAL) A method according to claim 10, wherein the organic polyol is selected from the group consisting of hexahydroxy cyclohexane (inositol) and mono- and disaccharides.

12. (ORIGINAL) A method according to claim 11, wherein the organic polyol is glucose, fructose or sucrose.

13. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The method according to ~~any one of claims 3-12~~ claim 3, wherein the concentration of nicotine in said aqueous solution of nicotine is from about 5% by weight to about 50% by weight.

14. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The method according to ~~any one of claims 3-13~~ claim 3, wherein the ratio of cation exchange resin to nicotine is from 1:1 to 10:1.

15. (ORIGINAL) The method according to claim 14, wherein the ratio of cation exchange resin to nicotine is from 2:1 to 6:1.

16. (ORIGINAL) The method according to claim 14, wherein the ratio of cation exchange resin to nicotine is about 4:1.

17. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The method according to ~~any one of claims 3-16~~ claim 3, wherein the ratio cation exchange resin to organic polyol is from 1:1 to 10:1.

18. (ORIGINAL) The method according to claim 17, wherein the ratio of cation exchange resin to organic polyol is from 2:1 to 8:1.

19. (ORIGINAL) The method according to claim 17, wherein the ratio of cation exchange resin to organic polyol is about 2.4:1.

20. (ORIGINAL) A method of preparing a nicotine delivery product having a nicotine release rate of at least 80% over a 10 minute period, said method comprising:

(a) mixing an aqueous solution of nicotine with a cation exchange resin selected from the group consisting of:

(i) a methacrylic, weakly acidic type of resin containing carboxylic functional groups,

(ii) a polystyrene, strongly acidic type of resin containing sulfonic functional groups, and

(iii) a polystyrene, intermediate acidic type of resin containing phosphonic functional groups

thereby forming a nicotine/cation exchange resin complex,

(b) admixing with said complex of step (a) an organic polyol or an aqueous solution thereof to form an aqueous slurry of nicotine/cation exchange resin complex incorporating polyol, and

(c) removing water from said slurry to produce said nicotine delivery product.

21. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) A nicotine delivery product obtainable by a method according to ~~any one of claims 3-20~~ claim 20.

22. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) A chewable gum composition comprising a chewing gum base and a nicotine delivery product ~~as defined in claims 1-3 or prepared by the method defined in any one of claims 3-21~~ product according to claim 1, wherein the nicotine delivery product is substantially uniformly distributed in said chewing gum base.